

Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner
Steve Jensen, Editor



Connecticut Department of Agriculture
Dec. 22, 2015



Alex DeFrancesco in a test hopyard he built last year at his family's farm in Northford.

CONNECTICUT HOPS INDUSTRY, GROWERS' ALLIANCE TAKING SHAPE

By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky

By next spring, the distinctive tall wooden poles, trellis wires and hanging vines of hopyards will be a more common sight on Connecticut farms.

An initial meeting of what could become the Connecticut Hops Growers' Alliance attracted nearly 20 people from across the state, many who either recently began growing hops or plan to do so next season.

A second meeting of the group – spurred by Connecticut's booming craft beer market – is scheduled for Jan. 5 at 1 p.m. at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) Valley Laboratory, 153 Cook Hill Road, Windsor. All those interested are welcome to attend.

X. Garrison of Garrison Family Farms in South Windham has already been experimenting with different hop varieties at the 25-acre farm.

"I hope to have a couple acres up under trellis by spring," he said at the initial meeting.

Peter Surapine from Enfield said he sees hops as a crop that could give him the opportunity to "dive in and find my own niche I can make some money on."

The meeting was organized by Vic Triolo, a retired professor and hops enthusiast who with the help of a state Department of Agriculture grant is running a hops-growing research project at the CAES stations in Hamden and Windsor.

Triolo believes Connecticut has the right climate, soils and market potential to support a robust hops industry, similar to the one thriving in New York state, that would supply local and regional brewers of craft beer.

"This is just the beginning," he said of the group's intention to form a non-profit grower's alliance that would set quality standards, help establish regulations and promote the industry. "I think once this gets rolling people are going to be coming out from everywhere."

Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky attended the meeting, expressing his support for growing this sector of state agriculture and encouraging participants to formalize an organization to move the industry forward here.

The commissioner noted that the agency offers matching grants to restore fallow land, help purchase equipment and build needed infrastructure.

"This is a pretty exciting opportunity for Connecticut agriculture and to grow Connecticut farms," Reviczky told the group. "We have a lot of tools in our toolbox to assist you individually and as an organization. This is a great initiative and we want to be a partner in it."

Triolo's experimental hopyard at Lockwood Farm contains about 35-40 varieties, and the trial is designed to determine

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LANCASTER, PA., LIVESTOCK SUMMARY

Avg. Dressing

SLAUGHTER COWS:	LOW	HIGH
breakers 75-80% lean	66.00	72.00
boners 80-85% lean	65.00	71.50
lean 88-90% lean	62.00	68.00
SLAUGHTER STEERS		
Ch2-3 1300-1600 lbs	116.00	121.00
1600-1800 lbs	108.50	116.00
Sel 1-3 1300-1600 lbs	112.00	116.00
SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS		
HiCh/Prm 3-4		
1300-1650 lbs	104.50	106.50
1650-1800 lbs	97.00	105.00
Ch 2-3 1200-1650 lbs	97.00	104.50
1650-1850 lbs	91.50	98.50
Sel 1-2 1200-1650 lbs	92.00	98.00
1650-1800 lbs	86.00	92.00
SLAUGHTER HEIFERS		
Hi Ch/Prime 3-4		
1150-1500 lbs	114.50	118.00
Ch 2-3 1150-1500 lbs	111.00	115.00
Sel1-3 1250-1500 lbs	106.00	110.00
CALVES Graded bull		
No 1 98-128 lbs	235.00	250.00
No 1 94-96 lbs	200.00	200.00
No 2 102-128 lbs	225.00	237.00
No 2 94-100 lbs	200.00	220.00
No 2 80-92 lbs	155.00	175.00
No 3 72-130 lbs	145.00	154.00
Utility 60-110 lbs	105.00	137.00
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Woolled & Shorn		
Markets: Choice and Prime 2-3		
40-50 lbs	320.00	385.00
50-60 lbs	300.00	355.00
60-70 lbs	260.00	325.00
90-110 lbs	185.00	225.00
110-130 lbs	170.00	190.00
130-150 lbs	150.00	170.00
150-200 lbs	140.00	160.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3		
80-120 lbs	82.00	127.00
120-160 lbs	80.00	110.00
160-200 lbs	75.00	90.00
200-300 lbs	75.00	109.00
BUCKS		
120-160 lbs	85.00	125.00
160-200 lbs	72.00	120.00
200-300 lbs	74.00	115.00
SLAUGHTER KIDS: Sel 1, by head, est.		
40-50 lbs	130.00	150.00
50-60 lbs	140.00	175.00
60-70 lbs	170.00	195.00
70-80 lbs	195.00	225.00
80-100 lbs	215.00	255.00
SLAUGHTER NANNIES/DOES: Sel1, by head, est.		
80-130 lbs	195.00	235.00
130-180 lbs	215.00	240.00
SLAUGHTER BUCKS/BILLIES: Select 1		
100-150 lbs	375.00	445.00
150-250 lbs	450.00	545.00
250-300 lbs	570.00	595.00

NEW HOLLAND, PA., HOG AUCTION

All prices per cwt.

52-56	200-300 lbs	34.00	41.00
	300-400 lbs	28.00	35.00
48-52	200-300 lbs	29.00	36.00
Sows1-3	400-500 lbs	19.00	21.00
	500-550 lbs	24.50	28.50

WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Boston Terminal and Wholesale Grower Prices

NEW ENGLAND GROWN

	LOW	HIGH
APPLES, CORTLAND, #1, 100	19.00	19.00
APPLES, CORT, 12-3LB, XFCY	20.00	20.00
APPLES, HNYCRSP, XFCY, 80, 88	68.00	68.00
APPLES, EMPIRE, 120/140, #1, BU	18.00	18.00
APPLES, MACS, FNCY, 80, 88	18.00	18.00
APPLES, MACS, FNCY, 120, 140	18.00	18.00
APPLES, MACS, #1, 120	17.00	18.00
APPLES, MACS, #1, 140	17.00	18.00
APPLE, MACS, FCY, 12-3LB, 2-1/2"	15.00	16.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 12-12 OZ	12.00	15.00
BRUSSELS SPROUTS, 25 LBS	38.00	38.00
CARROTS, 25 LBS	10.00	10.00
CRANBERRIES, 24-12 OZ	33.00	33.00
PARSNIPS, MED, 20 LBS	19.00	23.00
PARSNIPS, MED, 18-1 LB	18.00	22.00
POTATO, FINGERLING, 20 LB	20.00	20.00
POTATO, RNDRED, 50 LBS	14.00	15.00
POTATO, RNDWHT, 1, CHEF, 50#	10.00	10.00
POTATO, YLLW, #1, CHEF, 50LB	14.00	14.00
PUMPKINS, PIE, 1-1/9	11.00	15.00
PUMPKIN, PIE, 36" BIN	190.00	230.00
RUTABAGAS, 50 LBS	12.00	13.00
SPINACH, FLAT, CTN, 24	15.00	17.00
SQUASH, ACORN, 1-1/9	12.00	15.00
SQUASH, BUTTERNUT, 1-1/9	11.00	13.00
TOMS, GHSE, CHERRY, 8-10 OZ	12.00	14.00
TOMATO, GHSE, ONVINE, 11LB	8.00	15.00
TOMATO, GHSE, LOOSE, 25LB	16.00	18.00
TOMATO, HEIRLM, GHSE, 10LBS	24.00	28.00
TURNIPS, PURPLE TOPS, 25LBS	10.00	12.00
TURNIPS, WHITE CAPE, 1-1/9	17.00	18.00

SHIPPED IN

CABBAGE, CANADA, 50 LBS	12.00	14.00
DAIKON, NJ, 1-1/9, 12 COUNT	27.00	27.00
GARLIC, ELEPHANT, CA, 10 LBS	42.00	42.00
GINGER ROOT, 5 LBS	8.00	11.00
KALE, SC, CRATES, 12 BNCH	13.00	14.00
LETT, BOSTN, CAN, HYDR, 12-4OZ	16.00	17.00
MACHE, GHSE, PA, 3 LBS	12.00	12.00
KOHLRABI, GA, CRT, 12-16BNCHS	16.00	18.00
MESCLUN MIX, CA, 3 LBS	6.00	6.50
MUSHROOM, ENOKI, PA, 12-3.5OZ	18.00	19.00
MUSHROOM, OYSTER, PA, 3 LBS	13.00	13.25
MUSHROOM, OYSTER, PA, 5 LBS	18.00	20.00
MUSHRM, PORTABELLA, PA 5LB	7.50	12.50
MUSHRM, SHITAKE, PA, LG, 3LB	14.00	15.00
MUSTARD GREENS, GA, 12	12.00	14.00
ONIONS, YELLOW, NY, 50 LBS	12.00	13.00
ONIONS, YELLOW, NY, 20-2LB	12.00	13.50
ONIONS, RED, 10 LBS	7.50	9.00
SWISSCHARD, GREEN, CA, 12	16.00	20.00

NEW ENGLAND AND NJ FLOWERS

HYDRANGEA, NJ, PER BNCH	12.50	12.50
POINSETTIA, NE, 6" POT	3.69	9.99
SUNFLOWER, LGE, NE, 5 FLWRS	5.50	6.50
SUNFLOWER, LGE, PA, 5 FLWRS	6.50	7.50
SUNFLOWER, LGE, NJ, EACH	.85	1.00
SUNFLOWER, MINI, PA, 10 STEMS	7.50	7.50

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT, December 21, 2015

Bob Calves:	LOW	HIGH
45-60 lbs.	65.00	70.00
61-75 lbs.	105.00	107.50
76-90 lbs.	150.00	155.00
91-105 lbs.	160.00	170.00
106 lbs. & up	175.00	180.00
Farm Calves	225.00	240.00
Starter Calves	55.00	60.00
Veal Calves	125.00	160.00
Open Heifers	120.00	130.00
Beef Heifers	83.00	111.00
Feeder Steers	90.00	155.00
Beef Steers	52.00	115.00
Stock Bulls	150.00	162.50
Beef Bulls	92.00	106.00
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs	22.50	60.00
Sheep	105.00	172.50
Lambs	40.00	200.00
Goats each	120.00	315.00
Kid Goats	90.00	150.00
Canners	up to	69.00
Cutters	70.00	74.00
Utility Grade Cows	75.50	80.00
Rabbits each	5.00	18.00
Chickens each	3.00	16.00
Ducks each	4.00	17.00

Auction will be held as usual on
December 28, 2015

NORTHEAST EGGS/USDA

Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white
in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	1.22	1.36
LARGE	1.16	1.30
MEDIUM	.81	.94

NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS

Per doz. Grade A brown in
carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	1.75	1.90
LARGE	1.69	1.80
MEDIUM	1.20	1.29
SMALL	1.00	1.08

PA WEEKLY GRAIN REPORT

Per bu., delivered to elevator or grain mill.

US NO. 2 YELLOW CORN		
Eastern	3.90	4.13
Central	3.85	4.14
Western	3.69	3.75
US NO. 2 SOFT RED WINTER WHEAT		
Eastern	5.07	5.57
Central	4.60	4.86
Western	8.31	8.63

FOR SALE

1-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or www.bludon.com

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or www.bludon.com

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.

4-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

5-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci today at 203-444-6553.

8-R. CT non-GMO grain and corn. Hay and straw. Pleasant View Farms. Louis. 860-803-0675.

131-R. For sale: Vaughan vertical wet-well recirculating Chopper Pump; type used for manure pit. Best offer. Call Steve S. 860-286-9999 X 134.

WANTED

136. Maple Lane Farms is a hydroponic grower of produce for the retail and food service markets. Due to increased demand from our customers, we are seeking greenhouse owners to grow our products on a contract basis. If interested, call 860-227-8786.

MISCELLANEOUS

6-R. Farm/Land specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tustin Realty (860) 644-5667.

DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE OFFERING**GRANT-WRITING SEMINARS**

Connecticut Department of Agriculture staff are available to present at farmer meetings and conferences on grant opportunities and ways to improve grant-writing skills.

Presentations will be customized to the event and can range from 45 minutes to up to two hours in length. All presentations will include:

- Grant opportunities through the agency
- How to improve grant-writing skills
- What makes a successful application
- Insight into project evaluation

Presentations longer than an hour may also include:

- Farmer success stories
- Active brainstorming; putting pen to paper

Those interested may contact Jaime Smith at

Jaime.Smith@ct.gov or 860-713-2559.

All presentations must be given by the end of March 2016.

CT VEGETABLE AND SMALL FRUIT GROWERS' CONFERENCE JAN. 11

The annual CT Vegetable and Small Fruit Growers' Conference will be held Monday, January 11 from 8 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. at Maneeley's Conference Center, 65 Rye St., South Windsor.

This will be one of the last chances to obtain Pesticide Applicator Re-certification Credits for 2015. There will be 2-3 hours of re-certification credits available (pending DEEP approval).

Pre-registration postmarked by Jan. 6 is \$40 and reserves food and refreshments. Late registration or walk-in's are \$60.

Door registration, continental breakfast and trade show starts at 8 a.m. and educational talks start at 8:55 a.m.

For full program, directions and a pre-registration form, go to www.ipm.uconn.edu/ or email MacKenzie.White@UConn.edu, or call 860-875-3331.

Hosted by UConn, USDA and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

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which would work best in Connecticut. Some do better in a traditional "high trellis" system that employs 18-foot-high poles strung along the top with thick trellis wire, from which hang the long heavy twine "bines" that hold the climbing hops as they grow.

Others are more adapted to the 8-foot "low trellis" system that produces a thicker hedge of hops that are more easily harvested.

Triolo wants to establish a database of propagating cuttings from the plants, which would enable growers to choose successful varieties to plant.

"You need to get the right hops for your system," Triolo said at the meeting.

James LaMondia, Chief Scientist at CAES who is overseeing Triolo's research, said early results indicate that Connecticut's climate and soils are well-suited for growing hops.

Noting that many hop growers now buy their seeding plants from Michigan, he said: "Things are different here than Michigan but not that much different."

CAES has also done trials with barley, a key beer-making ingredient from which malt is extracted.

"It's done very well," Lamondia said. "Our yields are better than the national average."

Barley is now commonly used as a winter cover crop that is tilled into the soil as fertilizer in spring.

"If you use your combine to harvest it you can get a cash crop out of that," Northford grower Alex DeFrancesco said at the meeting, during which he discussed his ambitious plans to plunge into the hops business.

DeFrancesco, whose family runs a well-known flower and vegetable farm, built his own small experimental hopyard last year.

He is now installing a high-trellis system – using poles fashioned from old cedar trees cut on the property – on a sloping hillside acre overlooking the main farm.

Hops are very sensitive to pests, diseases and mildew, he said, and his test hopyard is aimed at finding resistant varieties.

"This year it was the leaf hopper," that did the most damage to his crop, he said. "They usually don't go for hops but this year they did."

He has bought starting plants from Michigan and Maine, but was not satisfied with the quality in either case, perhaps from damage caused in shipping. So he is experimenting with propagating his own plants in a greenhouse.

"Hops isn't a crop you just jump into," he said. "You have to grow what grows best here."

DeFrancesco said it typically costs about \$10,000 to set up an acre of hops, and three to four years to establish a marketable crop. After expenses are figured in, he estimates profit could range between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per acre.

He said he has spoken to some Connecticut tobacco farmers who are exploring getting into hops, which could be grown using existing pole and trellis wire systems on shade tobacco farms.

"They have the set-up already so it would be an easy way to diversify," he said.

He also has had conversations with several large brewers in the state that have expressed interest in buying local hops.

"I believe the market is there and you can get a nice return on it," DeFrancesco said this week as he continued work on his new hopyard.

James Shepherd, who planted nine acres of hops last year at his Smokedown Farm in Sharon and also attended the growers' alliance meeting, agrees.

"I think I might be the biggest hop grower in Connecticut right now," he said. "We're determined to make a commercial operation of it."



Top left and above: Some of the beer Alex DeFrancesco brews for personal use in his grandfather's former wine cellar on the family's Northford farm.

Left: DeFrancesco walks through an acre of land he has cleared for growing hops, using poles made from cedar trees cut on the property.

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